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DE RUEHKG #0058/01 0211531
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
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FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7214
INFO RUCNCOM/EC CARICOM COLLECTIVE
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0541
RUEHOT/AMEMBASSY OTTAWA 2350
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RUMIAAAA/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL
RUEAWJA/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KINGSTON 000058

SIPDIS
SENSITIVE

DEPT PASS TO CENTRAL AMERICAN CARIBBEAN BASIN COLLECTIVE

DEPT FOR WHA/CAR
- ANDRE CADIEUX TREASURY FOR ERIN NEPHEW
JUSTICE FOR ROBERT LIPMANN

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PREL](#) [ETRD](#) [EAID](#) [ECON](#) [SNAR](#) [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [PHUM](#) [KCRM](#)
KCOR, UNGA, JM, XL
SUBJECT: JAMAICA: AMBASSADOR JOHNSON'S FAREWELL CALLS ON
PRIME MINISTER AND ON MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND
FOREIGN TRADE

REF: A. 08 KINGSTON 571 (251519Z JUN 08)(NOTAL)
[1](#)B. 08 KINGSTON 516 (061954Z JUN 08)(NOTAL)

Summary

1.(SBU) Appreciation for U.S. assistance, trade and investment, the Summit of the Americas, anti-crime and anti-corruption efforts, and the opportunity for Jamaica to make its case with the arrival of a new Administration in Washington were principal themes of Ambassador Brenda L. Johnson's farewell courtesy calls on Prime Minister Bruce Golding and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade Kenneth Baugh. End Summary.

Farewell Call on Prime Minister

2.(SBU) Ambassador Johnson, accompanied by DCM, had her farewell call on Prime Minister (PM) Bruce Golding on January [1](#)16. Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade (MFA&FT) Kenneth Baugh accompanied Golding. The Prime Minister thanked the Ambassador for her three years of service. The Ambassador then outlined some recent and ongoing elements of U.S. engagement in Jamaica, including the recent visit of the High Speed Vessel USS Swift, the approval of U.S. \$5 million in Hurricane Gustav reconstruction assistance, expanded HIV/AIDs programs, and our programs in Jamaica on crime and security. The Ambassador's main point to Golding was that Jamaica needs to be a better advocate for its own interests in Washington, and that the arrival of the new Administration will provide Jamaica a renewed opportunity to make its case. She noted that WHA Assistant Secretary Shannon had been asked to stay on for now, and would be a good starting point for such efforts. The Ambassador also highlighted the April meeting of the Summit of the Americas in Trinidad and Tobago as a chance for the Caribbean region to engage the new President and his team. She noted that incoming Secretary of State Clinton had previously vacationed in Jamaica and had affection for the island. Former Secretary Colin Powell remained a friend as well, and might be cultivated further.

3.(SBU) PM Golding said it might be unfair to knock on the door of the new President with Jamaica's concerns "with all that he will have on his plate," but on the other hand, "if you don't do that, you get left off the list." The

Ambassador asked what Jamaica's main message would be, and the PM replied "trade and investment." Golding said his principal objective was to "fix and restructure" the Jamaican economy to ensure that, once the current financial turmoil ends, "we are in better shape to move forward when the storm passes." He hoped that out of the current financial crisis would emerge a better "regulatory infrastructure." Jamaica had had its own financial problems recently, particularly concerning the alternative investment schemes.

4.(SBU) The Ambassador suggested that the Prime Minister's dedication to fighting corruption would also improve the climate for attracting investment. She asked the PM for the current situation regarding anti-corruption legislation in Parliament. PM Golding replied that legislation to establish a special prosecutor to combat corruption was "well advanced" and would "make a huge difference." This was expected to become law by the end of the year. A second bill, Golding said, would give independent investigative authority to combat police corruption. "Jamaicans for Justice" had pointed out some flaws in the draft legislation which were now being corrected, and then this too would move forward. The PM then turned to the issue of Jamaica's reliance on senior police officers from the UK. He said he thought the police forces in the U.S., for example in Florida or the New York area, might have experience and knowledge more relevant to Jamaica's situation, and he asked if the U.S. might help in that regard. The Ambassador responded that discussions along these lines were already underway between our Narcotics Affairs Office (NAS) and Police Commissioner Lewin.

KINGSTON 00000058 002 OF 002

Farewell Call on Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade

5.(SBU) In a subsequent separate meeting with Minister Baugh, the Ambassador noted that she was glad that the Embassy had been able to accomplish some positive things of late, including the opening of a new consular call center, which had eliminated the backlog for visa appointments. She said she understood PM Golding felt that President-elect Obama would be overwhelmed by a pressing agenda upon taking office, and noted that the Summit of the Americas (SOA) scheduled April 17-19 in Port-of-Spain would be a golden opportunity for Jamaica to showcase its role as a regional leader; Secretary Clinton and Assistant Secretary Shannon would be there, and she believed SOUTHCOM Commander ADM Stavrides also would attend.

6.(SBU) The Ambassador then pointed out that several good recent opportunities for cooperation unfortunately had been missed. A prime example had been the proposed Conference on Caribbean Security to have been held in early December, which had been requested by CARICOM, and for which the USG had planned and budgeted, only to have the Caribbean states subsequently seek a postponement. Unfortunately, the PM had not been informed regarding the proposed conference. Baugh then asked whether the proposed conference would be on the agenda of the SOA; DCM replied that, in all probability, at the SOA the U.S. and Caribbean states would hold side discussions, and perhaps could raise the conference proposal then. The Ambassador then noted the importance to the U.S. and Jamaica of fighting corruption, and stressed that polygraph tests were essential for key personnel if USG assistance were to be sustained. She then raised the inordinate delays) up to a year -- in obtaining Jamaican death certificates, a source of great difficulties for the families of deceased U.S. citizens; Baugh said he would investigate. The Ambassador noted that the USG provided funding for a special prosecutor for lottery scams, but was deeply concerned that, to date, monies recovered had not been turned over to the U.S. as agreed; to enable continued U.S. assistance, Jamaica must show good faith. Baugh noted that such scams had evolved from the telephone call centers on the

north coast; Montego Bay had become an "epicenter," which had led to many murders.

7.(SBU) In response to Ambassador's inquiry, Baugh said that he, rather than the PM, probably would attend the UNGA. He then thanked the Ambassador for having been "a great friend of Jamaica." The Ambassador said she would play an active role as a member of the American Friends of Jamaica. Baugh then said that, during its recent retreat, the Cabinet had decided to look for ways to "intensify relations" between Jamaica and the U.S. The Cabinet had determined that, across the region, those countries having implemented trade agreements with the U.S.) NAFTA, CAFTA, or FTAs -- have done well; such an agreement would benefit Jamaican producers and workers. Jamaica would be speaking with Honduras, Panama, and Costa Rica regarding the benefits of concluding an FTA with the U.S. Baugh concluded by expressing the hope that the Jamaican diaspora in the U.S. would help to strengthen ties between the two countries.

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